



Community Health Improvement Planning

# Highlands County



## Community Health Improvement Plan 2018 - 2021

### **Mission Statement:**

To identify and address health issues important to Highlands County residents through planning and community partnerships

### **Vision Statement:**

Engaging the community today for a healthier tomorrow.

*Adopted 1/1/2018  
Last reviewed 2/2019*



# Florida Department of Health in Highlands County

## **Sebring**

7205 South George Boulevard  
Sebring, FL 33875

## **Lake Placid**

106 North Main Avenue  
Lake Placid, FL 33852

## **Avon Park**

400 South Lake Avenue  
Avon Park, FL 33825

## **Environmental Health**

501 South Commerce Avenue  
Sebring, FL 33870

<http://Highlands.floridahealth.gov/>

## **Produced by**

The Florida Department of Health in Highlands County  
Community Health Improvement Planning Committee  
January 2018

## Special thanks to Contributors and Community Partners

### Community Partners

Advent Health  
Champion for Children Foundation  
Children's Advocacy Center  
Central Florida Healthcare  
City of Sebring  
Drug Free Highlands  
Florida Department of Health  
Fusion Health Care Center  
Hanley Foundation  
Healthy Start Coalition  
Highlands Regional  
Highlands County Board of County Commissioners  
Heartland Rural Health Network  
Lake Placid Police Department  
Peace River Center  
Tobacco Free Partnership / QuitDoc  
Tri-County Human Services

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# FDOH Mission, Vision, and Values

The Florida Department of Health in Highlands County is an integrated agency under the direction of the Florida Department of Health located in Tallahassee with local, county, and state commitment. Public health departments play a crucial role in protecting and improving the health of people and communities. In cities, towns, and states across the nation, health departments provide a range of services aimed at promoting healthy behaviors; preventing diseases and injuries; ensuring access to safe food, water, and life-saving immunizations; and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies.



## Mission – Why do we exist?

To protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county, and community efforts.

## Vision – What do we want to achieve?

To be the *Healthiest State* in the Nation.

## Values – What do we use to achieve our mission and vision?

**Innovation:** We search for creative solutions and manage resources wisely.

**Collaboration:** We use teamwork to achieve common goals & solve problems.

**Accountability:** We perform with integrity & respect.

**Responsiveness:** We achieve our mission by serving our customers & engaging our partners.

**Excellence:** We promote quality outcomes through learning & continuous performance improvement.

# Executive Summary

In an effort to improve the health of the residents of Highlands County, a collaborative partnership was formed between the Highlands County Health Department and the Health Council of West Central Florida, Inc. (HCWCF) for the purpose of conducting a needs assessment for use by the Highlands County Community Health Improvement Planning Committee and other community partners.

The Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP) Committee is comprised of area residents and business leaders with an interest in improving the health of their community. For the duration of the project, these members devoted time during their monthly meetings to aid in the creation and implementation of this community assessment.

HCWCF reviewed numerous data sources and received feedback from the CHIP Committee as well as from members of the community through surveys and interviews. The Committee reviewed the preliminary data that was collected and provided feedback to the Health Council.

This needs assessment consists of demographic, socioeconomic, and health status information that will be used to identify areas where targeted interventions and policy changes may have the greatest impact. Once community needs were identified through quantitative data analysis of demographic, socioeconomic, and health status information, and qualitative interviews, the strategic planning process began.

No institution or organization can improve community health alone; this can only be achieved through strong partnerships. The CHIP outlines a framework for achieving improved health in Highlands County.

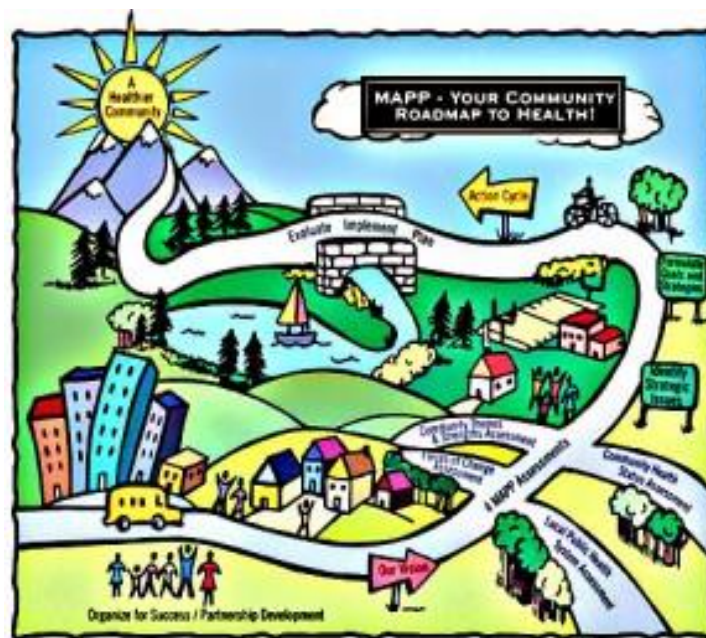
# Background and Overview

## What is the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)?

In 2015, the Highlands County Health Department and its Community Health Steering Committee updated the County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), using a process called Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP). The MAPP process, was developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The MAPP process is a community-driven, highly participatory process which is intended to bring together not only health care providers, but also mental health and social service agencies, public safety agencies, education and youth development organizations, recreation agencies, economic development agencies, environmental agencies, local governments, neighborhood associations, and civic groups.

The CHIP is based on data from the Highlands County Community Health Assessment (CHA), Community Health Profile, community surveys conducted in 2015, key informant interviews, input of the Highlands County Community Health Workers, input from the Health Planning Council of Southwest Florida, and input received at community meetings.

The Community Health Steering Committee embarked on identifying issues that were impacting the community. Using the framework of assessing Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT), issues was identified. Following the issue identification, committees were sanctioned to address those issues. The CHIP elements include a broad course of recommended actions, detail on the MAPP process and information about the strategic health issues effecting Highlands County.



## Role of the Community Health Improvement Planning Committee

The Highlands County Community Health Steering Committee is primarily supported by Department of Health (DOH) funds. This committee is comprised of community members, health and social service providers, educators, County Commissioners, and other private and public employees that serve County residents. The Committee's goal is to improve the health and wellbeing of all Highlands County residents and neighborhoods through a variety of strategic activities:

- Develop a Community Health Profile to identify and map the community's health resources, needs and characteristics
- Identify and prioritize important health issues related to individual, familial, school and neighborhood residents
- Work in partnership with other individuals, groups and agencies to promote health awareness and to provide community education about health issues
- Create action plans to achieve the systemic changes needed to meet the varied health needs of all Highlands County residents

The Highlands County 2017 – 2020 CHIP was prepared in collaboration with the Highlands County Community Health Steering Committee. The outcome was a five-year, community-wide plan that identifies health priorities, goals and strategies for addressing those priorities. The CHIP is intended to guide the planning and implementation of activities for the Committee. It is intended to be a living document, to be widely disseminated and updated as necessary.

The Highlands County CHIP along with participation from the Florida Department of Health in Highlands County and local representatives from various agencies and organizations began the CHA review process in July 2016. The Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships, (MAPP) a strategic approach to community health improvement process was chosen as a framework for the assessment. The State Health Plan priorities and the Essential Public Health Services also provided additional direction.

## Assessment and Dissemination

This report will only be beneficial to the residents of Highlands County if the information it contains is utilized by the Highlands County Health Department, community leaders, and other community partners. This includes demographic, socioeconomic and health status information as well as input from the community that can be used to identify health priorities as well as available resources.

- Committee members will review the plan and objectives on a quarterly basis, at a minimum and revise as objectives are met or changed
- Document will be provided to Community partners for distribution
- Document will be posted on Florida Department of Health – Highlands County's website
- Agendas, meeting minutes, photos, press releases, policies, proclamations, and objectives will be compiled and discussed quarterly with the CHIP Committee to review progress



## How to use this Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Everyone can play an important role in community health improvement in Highlands County, whether in homes, schools, workplaces, or churches. Encouraging and supporting healthy behaviors from the start is much easier than altering unhealthy habits. Below are some simple ways to use this plan to improve the health of the community:

### Community Residents

- Understand priority health issues within the community and use this Plan to improve health of your community.
- Use information from this Plan to start a conversation with community leaders about health issues important to you.
- Get involved! Volunteer your time or expertise for an event or activity, or financially help support initiatives related to health topics discussed in this Plan.

### Educators

- Understand priority health issues within the community and use this Plan and recommend resources to integrate topics of health and health factors (i.e. access to health food, physical activity, risk-behaviors, use of the health care system, etc.) into lesson plans across all subject areas such as math, science, social studies, and history
- Create a healthier school environment by aligning this Plan with school wellness plans/policies.
- Engage the support of leadership, teachers, parents, and students.

### Employers

- Understand priority health issues within the community and uses this Plan and recommend resources to help make your business a healthy place to work!
- Educate your team about the link between employee health and productivity.

### Faith-based Organizations

- Understand priority health issues within the community and talk with members about the importance of overall wellness (mind, body, and spirit) and local community health improvement initiatives that support wellness
- Identify opportunities that your organization or individual members may be able to support and encourage participation (i.e. food pantry initiatives, community gardens, youth groups geared around health priorities, etc.)

### Government Officials

- Understand priority health issues within the community.
- Identify the barriers to good health in your communities and mobilize community leaders to take action by investing in programs and policy changes that help members of our community lead healthier lives.

### **Health Care Professionals**

- Understand priority health issues within the community and use this Plan to remove barriers and create solutions for identified health priorities.
- Share information from this Plan with your colleagues, staff, and patients.
- Offer your time and expertise to local improvement efforts (committee member, content resource, etc.)
- Offer your patients relevant counseling, education, and other preventive services in alignment with identified health needs of the Lee County community.

### **State and Local Public Health Professionals**

- Understand priority health issues within the community and use this Plan to improve the health of this community.
- Understand how the Highlands County community and populations within the county, compare with peer counties, Florida, and the U.S. population, as a whole

# Community Health Assessment

The MAPP process required engagement of the local public health system partners and the community at large. These stakeholders have been engaged in various stages of the process. The revision of the Community Health Assessment (CHA) in 2015 resulted in updated community health statistics, both from primary and secondary data. Results from the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment (CTSA) have been analyzed with the reports from the other three assessments, which include the Local Public Health System Assessment (LPHSA), Community Health Status Assessment (CHSA) and the Forces of Change Assessment (FOCA).

## Community Themes and Strengths

The Highlands County Community Themes and Strengths Assessment (CTSA) were conducted as one of the four assessments in MAPP process. This assessment provides a deep understanding of the issues residents feel are important by answering the questions, “What is important to our community?” “How is quality of life perceived in our community?” and “What assets do we have that can be used to improve community health?”

The Health Planning Council of Southwest Florida, with feedback from the community committee, developed a survey questionnaire to assess the feelings and perceptions of healthcare and health issues for Highlands County residents. The survey was conducted online and on paper, in English, Spanish, and Creole. Surveys were distributed by members of the community committee to those who live and/or work in Highlands County. Links to the online version of the survey were distributed through flyers and email blasts.

In total, 286 surveys were completed on paper and online over a two-week period in the fall of 2015. Of those surveys, 263 of the surveys were completed in English, 14 in Spanish, and 9 in Creole.

As an additional component of the Highlands County community health assessment during the fall of 2015, individual interviews were conducted with key informants in the county to elicit their perception of the health status of county residents. Potential interview candidates were identified in conjunction with the Highlands County Community Health Improvement Planning (CHIP) committee. Candidates represented a variety of viewpoints and backgrounds. These interviews were intended to ascertain opinions among key individuals likely to be knowledgeable about the community and who are influential over the opinions of others about health concerns in the county. Candidates were contacted to determine their willingness and availability to participate in the interview process.

## Local Public Health Assessment

The Local Public Health System Assessment (LPHSA) focuses on all the organizations and entities that contribute to the public's health. The LPHSA answers the questions, "What are the components, activities, competencies, and capacities of our local public health system?"

The following table and chart shows a summary of performance score by Essential Public Health Service. The scores range from a minimum value of 0% (no activity is performed pursuant to the standards) to a maximum of 100% (all activities are performed at an optimal level)

How well did the system perform the ten Essential Public Health Services (EPHS)?		
EPHS Survey		Score
1	Monitor Health Status to Identify Community Health Problems	100
2	Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems and Health Hazards	100
3	Inform, Educate, And Empower People about Health Issues	100
4	Mobilize Community Partnerships to Identify and Solve Health Problems	100
5	Develop Policies and Plans that Support Individual and Community Health Efforts	95
6	Enforce Laws and Regulations that Protect Health and Ensure Safety	100
7	Link People to Needed Personal Health Services and Assure the Provision of Health Care when Otherwise Unavailable	100
8	Assure a Competent Public and Personal Health Care Workforce	100
9	Evaluate Effectiveness, Accessibility, and Quality of Personal and Population-Based Health Services	100
10	Research for New Insights and Innovative Solutions to Health Problems	100

Highlands County Health Department performs all activities at an optimal level. The lowest score received in Essential Service 5 in the "Develop Policies and Plans" at 95 percent.

## Community Health Status Assessment

The Community Health Survey questionnaire was developed to assess the feelings and perceptions of healthcare and health issues for Highlands County residents. The survey was conducted online and on paper, in English, Spanish, and Creole. Surveys were distributed by members of the CHIP Committee and others to individuals who live and/or work in Highlands County. Links to the online version of the survey were distributed through flyers and via email. 286 surveys were completed over a two-week period.

When respondents were asked about top health concerns, factors that they feel would improve the health of the community, and what health care services were most difficult to access, the answers were as follows:

Top Five – Health concerns	
Cancer (all types)	32.2%
Accidents and injuries	30.4%
Dental problems	30.1%
Heart disease and stroke	25.5%
Overweight and obesity	24.5%

Top Five – Factors to improve health	
Low-cost health care and insurance	59.8%
Cheaper healthy food	39.2%
Job opportunities	34.3%
Local specialty doctors	32.2%
Primary care/family doctors	31.8%

Top Five – Difficult to access health care services	
Dental care	33.9%
Specialty care	31.4%
No barriers	27.2%
Primary care	24.0%
Mental health/alcohol drug abuse	22.6%

## Forces of Change

The Forces of Change Assessment identifies forces such as legislation, technology, and other impending changes that affect the context in which the community and its public health system operate. During this assessment, the Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses, and Threats (SWOT) format was utilized. To do this, a brainstorming session among stakeholders was conducted and participants were asked to identify strengths and weaknesses of our community that could have health impacts.

### Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

2015 SWOT Analysis		
Internal	Strengths	Co-location of services, Willingness to share information, Three hospitals, Community Outreach, Volunteers
	Weaknesses	Communication, Transportation, Affordable housing
External	Opportunities	Community leadership involvement, Economic development, Access to care
	Threats	Social and political differences, Changes in leadership, Lack of communication

In October 2018, the SurveyMonkey tool was used to send out an annual SWOT analysis questionnaire to the members of the Living Well in Highlands County group. The results of the survey along with group discussion was used to review the findings at the November 13, 2018 meeting. The group consensus is listed below.

2018 SWOT Analysis		
Internal	Strengths	Three hospitals, Children's Advocacy Center, Churches, Networking, Many providers, Caring community, Climate
	Weaknesses	Only 1 Emergency clinic, Co-pays, Funding, Food deserts, Poor eating habits, Lack of mental health providers, Transportation, Lack of health knowledge, Access to educational opportunities
External	Opportunities	Quarterly stakeholder meetings, More therapy in schools, Food truck with fresh foods in schools, Community partner collaboration, More emergency clinics, Increase in mental health providers, Education on available health resources, Longer library hours, Utilization of resource that are available
	Threats	Communication, Lack of knowledge, Funding, Lack of community stakeholder involvement, Rural community, Employment wages, Transportation, Lack of mental health services

# Demographic Characteristics

The demographic, social, and economic characteristics of a community can strongly influence the community's health status and related service needs. This section provides a brief overview of some of the characteristics and trends in Highlands County, extracted from the Highlands County Health Assessment 2015.

## Population Demographics

The sheer number of people in a community is the leading determinant of the demand for healthcare services. Data estimates the 2014 population of Highlands County at just under 100,000 people (99,818), ranking it 35th among Florida's 67 counties and holding 0.5% of the state's total population. Sebring is the county seat, with a population of 10,331; the city of Avon Park and the town of Lake Placid are the county's other largest communities. Unincorporated communities include Placid Lakes, Sylvan Shores, Venus, Spring Lake, Brighton, Lorida, Ft. Basinger, Cornwell, and Palmdale. With a geographical area of 1,106 square miles, this rural county has a far lower population density than the Florida average; about 98 persons per square mile compared to a state average of 364 persons per square mile.

## Population Growth

Highlands County is the 36th most populous county in Florida. It has just over 100,000 population. It is a rural county, so there are fewer persons per square mile compared to Florida. One-third of the population is 65 and older. In addition to full-time residents, the County has a seasonal population of snowbirds or winter visitors.

*Source: The Florida Legislature, Office of Economic and Demographic Research*

## Age

The median age for residents of Highlands County is 53.4 years which is slightly older than the median age of residents of Florida at 41.6 years. The age distribution for Highlands County trends toward an older population. The population includes 18.2% that are under the age of 18 and 32.2% are 65 or older.

*Source: The Florida Legislature, Office of Economic and Demographic Research*

## Gender

The county is comprised of 48.7% male and 51.3% female; statewide the percentages are 51.1% female and 48.9% male. Nationwide females outnumber males, but it is common for men to outnumber women in rural areas.

*Source: The Florida Legislature, Office of Economic and Demographic Research*

## Race and Ethnicity

Ethnicity in Florida is classified separately from race. For ethnicity, a person must designate themselves as Hispanic or Non-Hispanic; people in both of those groups can identify as white, black or other non-white. Of the residents, 81.0% identify with White alone, 17.4% as Hispanic or Latino, and only 9.4% as black or African American alone.

*Source: The Florida Legislature, Office of Economic and Demographic Research*

## Socioeconomic Indicators

The figures shown below summarize some of the primary indicators of economic health for the county and state. The unemployment rate increased from 4.8% in 2000 to 6.6% in 2016; it is, however, slightly higher than the state rate of 4.9%. The percent of people living below the poverty

level in Highlands County is slightly above that of the state rate. High School and secondary education rates also fall below the state average.

<b>Socioeconomic Indicators</b>		
	Highlands	Florida
Percent of total population below poverty level	19.1%	14.8%
Ages 5-17 in families in poverty	30.3%	20.1%
Percent of civilian labor force unemployed	6.6%	4.9%
Median household income	\$35,865	\$48,900
High school graduate or higher	83.3%	87.2%
Bachelor's degree or higher	16.5%	27.9%

Source: The Florida Legislature, Office of Economic and Demographic Research

## Disparities

Healthy People 2020 defines health equity as the “attainment of the highest level of health for all people. Achieving health equity requires valuing everyone equally with focused and ongoing societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, historical and contemporary injustices, and the elimination of health and health care disparities.”

Healthy People 2020 defines a health disparity as “a particular type of health difference that is closely linked with social, economic, and/or environmental disadvantage. Health disparities adversely affect groups of people who have systematically experienced greater obstacles to health based on their racial or ethnic group; religion; socioeconomic status; gender; age; mental health; cognitive, sensory, or physical disability; sexual orientation or gender identity; geographic location; or other characteristics historically linked to discrimination or exclusion

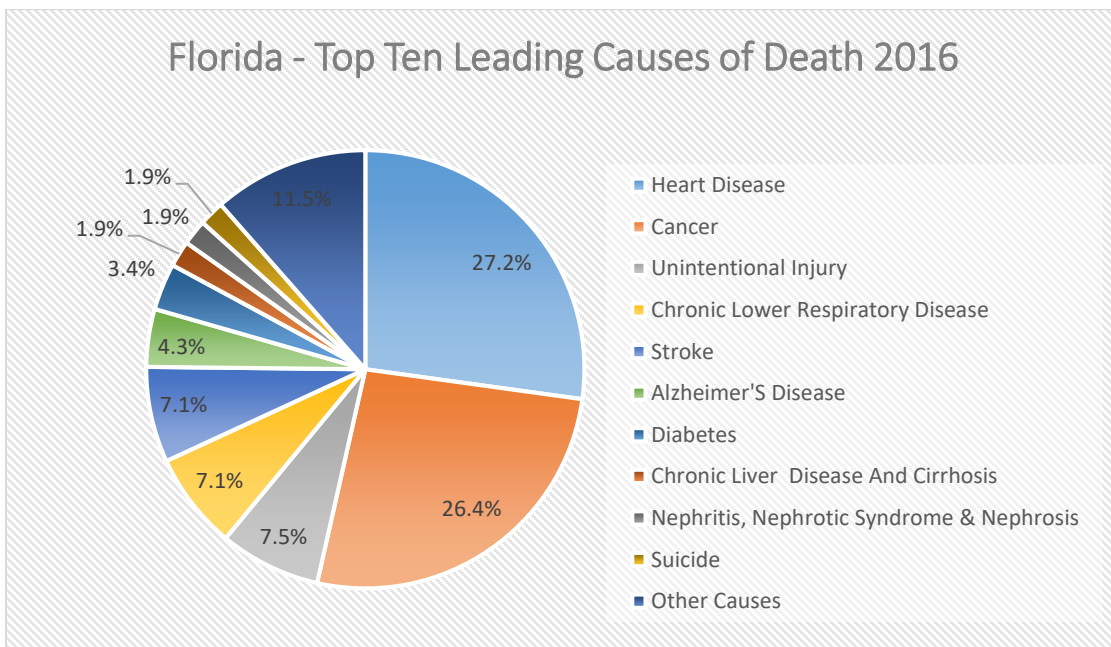
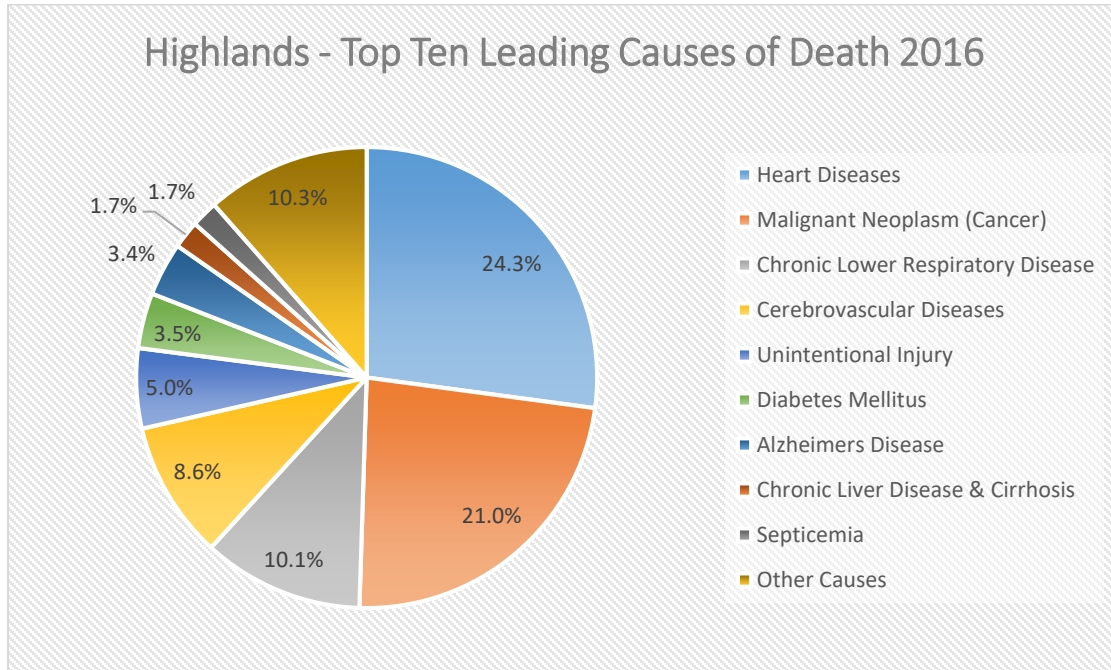
<b>African American</b>				
<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Year(s)</b>	<b>Rate Type</b>	<b>Black Rate</b>	<b>White Rate</b>
<b>Access to Care</b>				
Adults who said their overall health was good to excellent	2016	Percent	57.5%	76.1%
Adults who visited a dentist or a dental clinic in the past year	2016	Percent	49.4%	57.2%
<b>Maternal and Child Health</b>				
Births to unwed mothers ages 20-54	2014-16	Percent	88.4%	59.1%
Mothers who initiate breastfeeding	2014-16	Percent	58.5%	79.2%
<b>Congestive Heart Failure</b>				
Age-adjusted hospitalization rate	2014-16	Per 100,000 Pop.	455.3	194.5
<b>Prostate Cancer</b>				
Age-adjusted incidence rate	2012-14	Per 100,000 Pop.	144.8	54.0
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>				
HIV Infection Cases	2014-16	Per 100,000 Pop.	38.2	2.4



Hispanic				
Indicator	Year(s)	Rate Type	Hispanic Rate	Non-Hispanic Rate
<b>Access to Care</b>				
Adults who have a personal doctor	2016	Percent	51.9%	85.1%
Adults who had a medical checkup in the past year	2016	Percent	64.6%	80.0%
<b>Maternal and Child Health</b>				
Repeat births to mothers Ages 15-19	2014-16	Percent	24.2%	12.2%
Births to mothers over 18 without high school education	2014-16	Percent	33.0%	17.3%
<b>Modifiable Risks and Behaviors</b>				
Adults who are overweight	2014-16	Percent	50.8%	33.3%

# Health Profile

The two charts below show data for the top ten leading causes of death. One displaying data for Highlands county and one for the State of Florida.



Source data: FL Charts

# Moving Forward

The Highlands County Health Department (CHD) was established to address community health needs by providing quality public health services that are equally available and accessible to all residents and visitors as needed. The mission of the Highlands CHD is to promote, protect, maintain, and improve the health and safety of all citizens and visitors within the county. Highlands CHD is one of 67 county health departments' statewide providing services to meet the local needs under the overall guidance, direction, and coordination of the Florida Department of Health and it is committed to improving health outcomes for the local community. HCHD continually tries to make a difference in the lives of community members through hard work and community partnerships.

The SWOT analysis and Community Health Assessment provided significant findings that were incorporated into the current Community Health Improvement Plan and will add to community efforts for meeting the Healthy People 2020 Goals national health promotion and disease prevention initiative, whose goals are to increase the quality and years of healthy life and eliminate health disparities. Of all the potential priorities, Alcohol and Substance Abuse, Obesity and Diabetes and Chronic Disease were the focus of this Community Health Improvement Plan.

Without the input from the public health system partners and local residents that participated in this process, the CHIP could not have been developed, and without their continued collaboration and dedication, the goals established here cannot be fulfilled.

HCHD welcomes your feedback to this Community Health Improvement Plan and encourage you to learn more about Highlands County. For more information, please visit us at <http://Highlands.floridahealth.gov/> to learn how you can be a part of continuing to implement the strategic objectives and action steps outlined in our CHIP.

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
01/23/17	CHIP
02/27/17	CHIP
03/27/17	CHIP
04/24/17	CHIP
05/22/17	CHIP
06/26/17	CHIP
07/24/17	CHIP
08/28/17	CHIP

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
10/23/17	CHIP
01/22/18	CHIP
03/26/18	CHIP
05/21/18	CHIP
08/14/18	CHIP
11/13/18	CHIP
	CHIP
	CHIP

Meeting Date	Meeting Topic
	CHIP
	CHIP
	CHIP
	CHIP
	CHIP
	CHIP
	CHIP

# Revisions

The Community Health Improvement Planning Committee is responsible for measuring, monitoring, and reporting of progress on the goals and objectives of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), the members of which will monitor through a series of meetings, where the Strategic Issue objectives will be a standing agenda item. On a quarterly basis, the CHIP Committee will review data from FL Charts, BRFSS, and tracking reports, showing progress toward goals. An annual review and assessment of progress toward reaching goals and objectives and achievements will be completed.

Community partners will work closely with the CHIP Coordinator to provide necessary items to document objective targets. We will revise the Community Health Improvement Plan annually based on an assessment of availability of resources and data, community readiness, the current progress, and the alignment of goals.

This plan has been approved and adopted by the following individuals:

<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> Signature	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> Date
<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> Mary Kay Burns, MBA, BSN, RN / Health Officer Name and title	

Date	Revision Number	Description of Change	Pages Affected	Reviewed or Changed by
02/04/19	001	Added new organizations to Community Partners Page	No #	A. Tyner
02/04/19	002	Added updated SWOT Analysis	10	A. Tyner
02/04/19	003	Added list of meeting dates	15	A. Tyner
02/04/19	004	Added revision tracking	16	A. Tyner
02/04/19	005	Removed Colonoscopy objective & updated HPV objective	20	A. Tyner

For questions about this plan, contact:

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 (863) 993-4601 or (863) 382-7231

# Strategic Objectives

The priorities and strategies were identified using a compilation of the results of the MAPP assessments and Community Health Assessment 2015 data. After analysis and considerations of community feedback and statistical data, the Community Health Improvement Planning Committee developed a list of community health priorities.

Some considerations included; the upward/downward trend of the data, comparison of the data to state, national and county averages, community beliefs on main health concerns, greatest impacts considering resources available, risk of not addressing an issue, compatibility with other work being done in the community. Once the strategic priority areas were developed, the goals, strategies and objectives were identified.

The goal of the CHIP is to not only outline strategic issues, future action steps and strategies to improve the health of Highlands County, but to also align with already existing state, national objectives and other local programs, projects, and organizations. The group made efforts to align Highlands County with state and national objectives by referring to the Florida State Health Improvement Plan 2012-2015, Healthy People 2020, National Prevention Strategy, Health, and Human Services Action Plan to Reduce Disparities and CDC's Public Health Preparedness Performance Measures. Highlands County aligned their strategic issues with PACE-EH, and other local programs and projects.

## Strategy 1: Tobacco Abuse

Tobacco use and exposure to second hand smoke can be a contributing factor in cancer, heart disease and respiratory issues. All three of these health outcomes are prominent in the Highlands County community. Based on data from the Florida Youth Tobacco Survey, the percentage of youth 11-17 who have ever tried electronic vaping has increased 18.7% between 2012 and 2016.

To further reduce the prevalence of tobacco, use in the community, the Highlands County strategy is to coordinate with healthcare providers to refer patients to smoking cessation groups, provide tobacco prevention education in local schools, establish policies that increase the number of employers that offer access to cessation services to their employees, and discuss expansion of policies that increase the number of tobacco-free businesses within the community.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE ONE: TOBACCO USE			ALIGNMENT			PARTNERS
Objective	Action Steps	Due Date	Healthy People 2020	DOH Health Improvement Plan	7 Health Performs	Collaborative Organizations & Resources
Increase the percentage of adults who have never smoked from 51.9% to 55% by December 2020	1. Have five local businesses adopt the Tobacco Free Partnership of Highlands's smoke-free/vape-free policy	12/01/19	Tobacco Use	Increase access to resources that promote healthy behaviors, reduce illness, disability and death related to tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure.	Inhaled nicotine	Tobacco Free Partnership of Highlands  Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT)  QuitDoc  Florida Department of Health - Highlands
Decrease the percentage of youth age 11-17 who have ever tried electronic vaping from 26.3% to 24.0% by December 2020	2. Provide tobacco use prevention education in local schools	Ongoing				
	3. Host or partner in at least two health fairs per year to promote tobacco education	03/01/19				

Source: FL Charts, Florida Youth Tobacco Survey, BRFSS

## Strategy 2: Diabetes and Obesity

Another concern for the Highlands County Community is the percentage of the population that is overweight or obese. An adult that is obese is more likely to develop diabetes, heart problems, and certain types of cancer. The 2017 County Health Rankings data shows that 31% of the population is obese compared to the state level of 26%.

To address these strategies in Highlands County, several action steps have been outlined including: providing Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME), promotion diabetes and healthy choices education at local community health fairs, and increasing public awareness of health food promotional programs (WIC, Healthy Start, Healthy Families).

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE TWO: DIABETES & OBESITY			ALIGNMENT			PARTNERS
Objective	Action Steps	Due Date	Healthy People 2020	DOH Health Improvement Plan	7 Health Performs	Collaborative Organizations & Resources
Decrease the percentage of adults who have ever been told they had diabetes from 15.3% to 13.0% by December 2020	1. Provide Diabetes Self-Management Education to at least three clients per month	Ongoing	Diabetes, Nutrition and Weight Status	Reduce chronic disease morbidity and mortality, Increase the percentage of adults and children who are at a healthy weight.	Health Equity	Highlands Regional
Increase the percentage of adults who have a healthy weight from 33.9% to 35.0% by December 2020	2. Host or partner in two or more health fairs per year to promote diabetes education	03/01/19				Local providers
	3. Increase awareness of healthy food programs (i.e. WIC, Healthy Start, Food Banks)	12/01/18				Central Florida Healthcare  Florida Hospital  Florida Department of Health - Highlands PACE-EH, Closing the Gap

Source: County Health Rankings, FLCharts, BRFSS

### Strategy 3: Chronic Disease

Chronic Diseases are the most common and costly of all health problems, but they are also the most preventable. (Centers for Disease Control). In 2016, the top three major causes of death in Highlands County were heart disease, cancer, and Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease. The community also ranked chronic disease as one of their top 3 health concerns.

To lower these high rates of chronic disease, preventable strategic objectives were targeted including; hospitalizations due to coronary heart disease, those 50 years and over having a colonoscopy, and women receiving cervical cancer screenings. To achieve these objectives Highlands County outlined action steps as follows; educating the community about safe cholesterol levels, healthy lifestyles and appropriate screenings; educate the population regarding colonoscopies and cervical cancer screenings.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE THREE: CHRONIC DISEASE			ALIGNMENT			PARTNERS
Objective	Action Steps	Due Date	Healthy People 2020	DOH Health Improvement Plan	7 Health Performs	Collaborative Organizations & Resources
Increase the completion rate for teens ages 11-18, of the first HPV dosage from 83.0% to 85.0% by December 2020.	1. Host or partner in two or more health fairs per year to promote early detection and prevention screenings	03/01/2019	Cancer	Reduce chronic disease morbidity and mortality	--	Florida Hospital
	2. Increase awareness of the importance of annual exams	12/01/2020				Highlands Regional
	3. Promote an annual awareness event for both colorectal and cervical cancer.	12/01/2019				Florida Department of Health – Highlands Sebring Cancer Center Local Providers Heartland Rural Health Network Central Florida Healthcare

Source: County Health Rankings, FLCharts